WHAT IS FAFSA?

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the free application required by all public and private colleges and universities to determine student financial aid awards. Technical and trade schools also use the FAFSA to provide scholarships and grants. FAFSA is part of the U.S. Department of Education and awards over $150 billion to students each year.

Students who need financial assistance, such as scholarships, grants, or work-study, must complete the FAFSA.

Nearly all students who submit the FAFSA qualify for some form of financial aid, which makes FAFSA an essential part of any student's postsecondary planning process.

WHY IS COMPLETING THE FAFSA IMPORTANT?

The FAFSA can help you determine how much college or technical school will cost for your child. Submitting the FAFSA allows schools to provide you with an overview of costs, advise on access to grants that do not require repayment, and offer information on the types of student loans for which you may be eligible.

FAFSA IS FREE TO COMPLETE

Students will never be asked to pay a fee to submit their form.

BILLIONS AVAILABLE

Every year, **nearly $4 billion in financial aid goes unclaimed** because eligible students do not apply.

FAFSA IS FOR ALL PATHWAYS

In addition to colleges and universities, FAFSA is used to determine financial need for many workforce programs and technical/trade schools.

EVERY STUDENT SHOULD APPLY

It is always recommended to complete the FAFSA, even if you don't think you'll qualify for any financial aid. You may be eligible for other grants and scholarships at other job training programs.

IMPORTANT DATES

Oct 1ST FAFSA OPENS

The FAFSA application opens annually on October 1st. So, if you plan to attend college starting in the fall of 2026, the FAFSA application for that school year will open on October 1, 2025.

KNOW YOUR DEADLINES!

Each postsecondary institution has its own deadlines for when FAFSA applications need to be received. Check with the colleges or programs you're interested in attending to verify their deadlines. Be sure to ask if the deadline refers to the date your FAFSA form is processed or the date the college receives your completed FAFSA data.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE FAFSA

- [ ] **MOST RECENT TAX FORM**
  (1040, 1040A, 1040EZ) for parent and student (if applicable)
- [ ] **MOST RECENT W-2S**
  for parent and student (if applicable)
- [ ] **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OR ALIEN REGISTRATION NUMBER**
  for parents and students
- [ ] **FSA ID FOR STUDENTS**
  Students will complete in class
- [ ] **FSA ID FOR PARENTS**
  Parents with older children who submitted FAFSA or applied for FAFSA themselves will already have this and will need to locate it
- [ ] **DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER**
  (if applicable)

For PA residents, you are eligible for additional grant money through PHEAA. You can complete the state grant application directly on the FAFSA confirmation page. Look for the link that reads **"Start your state application to apply for Pennsylvania state-based financial aid."**

Mastery Schools

masterycharter.org/graduateready